

MY WATER SMELLS LIKE SEWAGE

POSSIBLE PROBLEM	HEALTH CONCERN?	OTHER CLUES & CONSIDERATIONS	CONFIRM IT	POSSIBLE FIXES	LICENSE REQUIRED FOR FIX?	STATE FUNDS?	MORE INFO
Sewage	Yes, sewage contains bacteria and viruses that are a hazard to your health. Do not use the water for drinking, bathing or cooking until it has been tested for coliform bacteria and it is confirmed to be safe to drink.	Is your septic system functioning properly? Was there a sudden change in taste, odor or appearance of your water, especially after heavy rainfall? Does your well have shallow or thin-walled casing pipe? Is limestone bedrock close to the ground surface? Is the well close to a sewer pipe or leaking sump?	Send a sample to a laboratory certified to test for coliform bacteria . Also contact a laboratory certified to test your water for chloride and nitrate .	Request an inspection of your septic system.	No license is required for the inspection, although licensed plumbers are the most qualified and can also help correct a problem.	No	Department of Commerce Local Health Department County Zoning Administrator
				Request an inspection of your well and pressure system. Include measurement of well casing depth.	No license is required unless the inspection is performed at time of property transfer; although Well Drillers and Pump Installers are the most qualified.	No	DNR website on Property Transfer Inspections
				Check for an unused well that should be filled and sealed	No license is required for the search, unless it is performed at time of property transfer; although Well Drillers and Pump Installers are the most qualified. Only licensed well drillers or pump installers may fill and seal an unused well.	Are not available for a search for unused wells. There are funds for filling and sealing unused wells .	DNR website on Filling and Sealing Unused Wells

MY WATER SMELLS LIKE SEWAGE, CONTINUED

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Iron Bacteria See Iron Bacteria brochure.	No, iron bacteria live off iron in the water. They are a nuisance, but not a threat to your health. There is no drinking water standard for iron bacteria.	Is there evidence of iron in your water; for example, red stains on fixtures or on laundry? Has there been a period of little or no water use?	Request a lab test for iron bacteria. Laboratories certified to test for coliform bacteria may also test for iron bacteria. Ask the lab.	Flush system and use more water	No	No	See Bacteriological Contamination of Drinking Water brochure.
				Shock chlorination	No	No	
				Well cleaning	No, but licensed Well Drillers or Pump Installers have the needed equipment.	No	
				Continuous pellet chlorination	Licensed Pump Installers or well owners must install. DNR recommends that license holders install.	No	Requires advance DNR approval. See Pellet Chlorination application .